**Close Reading /Literary Analysis**

**15% of Final Grade (5 pages typed)**

**Due Date:** By 11:59 pm, Thursday, October 11th

**Formatting:**

Typed using double-spacing and Times NR or Calibri 12 pt font

Student’s name, assignment, class meeting time in top left corner of first page only (no cover page)

Works Cited page if sources are used

**Drafting assistance:**

By me in my office, S 1098 (during office hours), or by a in the Writing Center, N 925 (by appointment only)

**Plagiarism or cheating:** Grade of zero. No make-ups.

**Topic:**

For this paper, you will choose **one** text to read through and explain closely. You will only be responsible for the interpretation of the work you identify as your focus—**there is no need to retell the entire text**.

You can choose between:

Whitman *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking*, *Song of Myself*

Dickinson *There’s a certain Slant of light*, *I felt a Funeral, in my Brain*, *Because I could not stop for Death*, *I heard a Fly buzz- when I died*, *The Brain—is wider than the Sky*, *Tell all the Truth but tell it slant*

Twain *The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*

Bierce *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*

Harris *The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story*, *How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox*

Winnemucca *Life Among the Piutes*

Zitkala Ša from *Impressions of an Indian Childhood*, from *The School Days of an Indian Girl*, *The Soft-Hearted Sioux*, *Why I Am a Pagan*

Chopin *Desiree’s Baby*, *The Story of an Hour*, *The Storm*

Gilman *The Yellow Wall-paper, Why I Wrote “The Yellow Wallpaper”*

Washington *Atlanta Exposition Address*

Du Bois from*The Souls of Black Folk*

Johnson *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*

Dunbar *We Wear the Mask*

Crane *The Open Boat*

London *To Build a Fire*

**I am not interested in how other works or people interpret the work**. It is not beneficial, for this assignment at least, to write a summary of what someone else thinks. Instead, **rely on yourself**. Look up place names, specific references, or words you do not know—but rely on your own thoughts overall. If you do end up using information that you looked up, CITE IT. Write as if you were teaching the work to this class.

For the five pages, you will

* present the major characters (or voice of author) and explain their actions/thoughts/dreams/concerns
* identify any shift(s) you see in the character (or author’s thoughts)
* decide and present the meaning behind any metaphors, allegories, or allusions you see being made
* consider what the author(s) may have intended readers to “get” from reading this section
* identify any large questions or ideas that the text approaches or addresses

You may find it easier to approach this assignment by first listing any themes, motifs, and symbols you find in the pages you selected. From there, work to address that list one by one.

Fully explain your ideas. Your reader is one who has read the work (i.e. do not summarize), but who does not necessarily see what you see… yet. Convince them. Use quotes thoughtfully, not as filler. Essentially, imagine that you are answering a question in class and supporting your ideas with the text.